President’s message

By all accounts, 2013 was an extremely busy year for the FIP. The world congress was a resounding success that was the result of considerable work by the FIP Board, CEO Dr. Robert Chelin and Executive Director, Jayne Jeneroux, along with the AIP Board. I want to extend my sincere thanks to everyone involved for raising the standard to a new level.

The world congress wasn’t the only success story for 2013. Equally exciting was the start of the FIP Lecture Series. Thanks to Footmaxx, the FIP was able to kick off a three-prong lecture program in three countries – Peru, Italy and Mexico. The series provides an opportunity for the FIP to work with companies, while providing educational programming for podiatrists in many countries. It also provides another source of non-dues income for the FIP, which helps enhance benefits for FIP members.

Another 2013 FIP highlight was orchestrating a truly interactive delegate session, which enabled FIP members to provide direct input into the future roadmap of the FIP. The comments and discussions from the delegate session provide a clear picture of some of issues and challenges that we as an international organization face.

For the first time in FIP history, we successfully conducted our first electronic vote on the FIP budget. This proved to be a huge success and demonstrated how the FIP has adapted to today’s technology.

Looking to 2014, the FIP board will be evaluating much of the information gathered in 2013 when the FIP conducts its strategic planning session in January.

2014 will also see the FIP return to Iceland for its AGM on May 10. The FIP hasn’t been there since 1996. Once again we will have a delegates session and discuss the results of the FIP Board strategic planning session. In Iceland we will also elect the the next FIP-IFP president, vice president and members at large.

Work is already underway for the 2016 World Congress of Podiatry, which will be held in Montreal, Quebec, Canada on May 26-28, 2016. Please mark your calendar now.

I wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy New Year!

Joseph Caporusso, DPM
FIP President
Canada

On the heels of the successful 2013 FIP World Congress of Podiatry, the Canadian Podiatric Medical Association is gearing up to co-host the 2016 FIP World Congress in Montreal, Quebec. The venue has already been chosen, and excitement is growing among the podiatric community across our vast country.

We’re thrilled that Canadian podiatrists were included as lecturers, moderators and attendees at the 2013 World Congress of Podiatry. We are also proud that one of our members was the recipient of this FIP Distinguished Service Award. Most FIP members know Dr. Robert Chelin, as he has been part of the FIP for many years. Canadian podiatrists know the dedication and commitment that Dr. Chelin has for podiatry, so it is especially rewarding to see that the international community also recognizes these qualities.

Other key activities that have taken place in Canada include the another successful Live Well with Diabetes event, which was held in Vancouver, British Columbia. 2013 was the 11th consecutive year of providing a public forum about diabetes health and wellness during the day and a holiday dinner for those less fortunate. Every year the dinner attendance grows and so does the willingness of podiatrists and other volunteers to get involved. This year the British Columbia Podiatric Medical Association was presented with an award from the Canadian Diabetes Association for its “world-class” volunteers.

Prior to hosting the 2016 World Congress, we are busy organizing the International Region 7/APMA Conference on May 2-4, 2014 in beautiful Banff, Alberta.

Cyprus

Despina Theodorou – President of the Cyprus Society of Podiatrists

I am very proud to announce that this year our society held its annual CPD event on the 8th and 9th of November. The event was held in the old part of Nicosia which was an excellent opportunity for our society members to walk through the cobbled streets of the town and for our guests to learn more about the capital which is also the largest city on the island of Cyprus. As our society is growing fast, this event gave us the chance to welcome many new members and exchange our experiences with each other.

Furthermore this year we had invited lecturers from the Glasgow Caledonian University to teach lectures and share their knowledge with our members. Mandy Abbott and John Locke accepted our invitations and both were welcomed by our society. This was an excellent opportunity for our members to attend lectures and learn more on various topics regarding Podopaediatrics, Sports Injuries, High Risk Foot as well as an update on the use of Local Anaesthesia.

We also had two guest lectures by local professionals. Mr. Nasos Athanasiou gave us a brief presentation on different approaches to the treatment of onychomycosis using natural products and the following day, Dr. Kyriakos Eleftheriou (Foot and Ankle Specialist) gave us a lecture regarding the referral pathways between podiatrists and orthopaedic surgeons.

The current year has been very exciting for our society due to the various events and activities that were organized and this is also due to the fact that our profession has been regulated and organized following a decade of hard work, discussions and of the many concrete

Continued next page
CLOSED IN ROME – THE WORLD CONGRESS OF PODIATRY

1200 participants from more than 30 countries, 8 plenary sessions to discuss the most important issues on the agenda; 30 workshops held by the most well-known specialists in the field; 28 posters depicting the most serious diseases break; 55 exhibitors with the latest innovations and pharmacological techniques – these are the figures of the World Congress of Podiatry organized by the International Federation of Podiatrists/Federation Internationale des Podologues (FIP) and the Italian Association of Podiatrists (AIP), which was concluded in Rome on October 19 after three days of intense work. It was an event of extraordinary importance that constituted a turning point in the growth of world podiatry in terms of research, study and training.

France

THE 2013 National French Congress of Podiatry about Surgery of the Foot, held in Paris on 4-5 October 2013 was very successful, with a great number of attendees and more than 50 companies presenting products and equipment for podiatry in the exhibition.

It permits FNP to meet with many orthopedic surgeons to help us upgrade our skills and competencies up to the ingrown nail surgery. We are supported by the Healthcare Ministry on condition that we have positive advice from the Orthopedic Surgeons Society.

Italy

FIP UPDATES

and effective measures that we followed. Many of our members were motivated towards achieving all these goals and improve the field of podiatry in Cyprus and thus I am very proud and excited to take this opportunity and thank them for their commitment and continuous support. The regulation of podiatry will hopefully open new doors in the future for all of our members who are interested in supporting and promoting podiatry to the general public and consequently offer our help to all patients at need.

Cyprus continued

The decision to have the congress in Italy, and especially in Rome, is an important witness of the current development of Italian podiatry. But the interest of the Congress derives from the opportunity it offers to understand what happens in other countries, what are the most important innovations in the field of diagnosis, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, what role podiatry plays in health systems of other countries. And, more and more frequent, in fact, is the need for pediatric care because of age (70% of the elderly suffer from diseases breach), the increase of diabetes and thus the complication of the diabetic foot in social transformations and then lifestyle changes (think of the game of football practiced by children, how many subjects are applying jogging and how many ladies follow fashion, giving the highest priority to the height of the heels). So just from this consideration becomes an obvious interest in a specialty that is increasingly growing in Italy.
During the opening ceremony, Joseph Caporusso, FIP President and Mauro Montesi, AIP President of AIP brought greetings. The welcome was followed by an interesting report by Ziparo Vincent, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Psychology, and comments from Mr. Sapienza, which, as the official speaker of Italy, focused on problems related to university education of podiatrists.

As emphasized in his speech, “the strong identification with the profession, in some cases, unfortunately, is accompanied by a marked perception of insufficient recognition.” So the AIP President wanted to draw, in an international context, the perceived lack in some countries, including Italy, of a culture that recognizes and strengthens the role of the podiatrist in health systems.

The topics covered during the congress – from the foot of the athlete to arthritic foot, from the breech to the foot geriatric dermatology, prevention and treatment of diabetic foot disease with the use of lasers in the breech, the skin biopsy to preventive medicine, to name just a few – testify to the importance of the event, not only in terms of research podiatry, but also in the interest of the people who must use the assistance of the podiatrist.

An important sign of progress, unanimously approved by Italian Podiatry, came from President Montesi’s report on the new computer system, called Podium, that the AIP sent to associated podiatrists. “At a time when there is much talk of the need for greater dissemination of digital technology in Italy,” said President Montesi, “AIP has been thinking about it and realized a fundamental tool for the management of the study and for the compilation of the medical record of each patient, but also to communicate with other health professions and in particular with general practitioners, health institutions and to provide statistical information of paramount importance.”

The three days of work were closed with the balance of the event and with the customary greetings from the FIP and AIP Presidents.

Hello dear members,

The year-end is approaching and I hope it was successful for you. For our part, it was a year of struggle with our Ministry of health. So far, podiatry is still not regulated and has no status. It is for this reason that the AMSP tries to get this specialty recognized. We asked the help of Dr. Robert Chelin and Dr. Joseph Caporusso to help us establish a status for our profession that is equivalent to the byelaws applied in other countries members of the FIP. We thank them for their involvement and their support. Unfortunately there is still no favourable response from the Department because for them our weak points are the small number of podiatrists practicing in the Morocco and also there is no local podiatry training program. I hope that 2014 will be a lucky year in that we will be able to give the Podiatry profession the place it deserves within the Moroccan health system.

I wish you all a very happy 2014 and hope to have the opportunity to meet you soon.

Hind Benziane. President, AMSP

The year 2013 has been a very interesting, but also hectic year for Dutch Podiatry. Many important issues have been initialised, both around the diabetic foot as in the field of reimbursements, quality care and science. The scientific committee completed the national protocol ‘Clinical examination of Peripheral Arterial Disease’ and our members had the opportunity to implement this in their daily practise by following one of the over 10 courses which were organised throughout the country.

In order to keep up with world wide innovations in the field of plantar orthotics, the NVvP decided to cooperate in 2014 with the organisers of the Orthotic Technology Forum (www.orthotic-technology-forum.com) and combine our annual conference with this forum. All FIP-delegates
PERUVIAN PODIATRY IN ROME
We highlight the presence of a group of Peruvian podiatrists at the World Congress of Podiatry in Rome last October. They were satisfied with the presentations and the various activities. We hope to gather more podiatrists from Peru and South America for the 2016 World Congress of Podiatry in Montreal, Canada.

After the World Congress, Peruvian podiatrists visited the Istituto Podologico Italiano of Rome to see the different areas of practice and to learn the teachers’ techniques. We also had the opportunity to appreciate the practice with patients. Thank you to the teachers and students for providing the opportunity to share their knowledge and give us their friendship. It was a nice experience to learn how the Italian podiatrist works.

Additionally, Elena Regalado, Director of the School of Podiatry JEVIAL, and Mauro Montesi, Director of Istituto Podologico Italiano, met to discuss common issues in the field of podiatry and the possibility of promoting academic competitions. There is great interest to undertake a cooperation between the two schools to promote academic discipline and qualifications in force.

PERU AND FRANCE UNITED FOR PODIATRY
A group of Peruvian podiatrists also had the opportunity to visit L’école de Podologie de Paris and their different areas of practice and we learned the teaching techniques for teachers. It was a very important visit because we had the opportunity to appreciate the practices with patients and see the good level of French podiatry. We thank Francois Dieter, teacher and his group of students by providing the opportunity to share their knowledge and friendship.

WORKING MEETING IN FRANCE
An important meeting also took place in Paris. Elena Regalado and Dominique Nuytens, Director of Podologie L’école de Paris (France), met to discuss common issues in the area of podiatry and the possibility for exchanges between institutions, for better podiatrist preparation between France and Peru.
**Peru continued**

There is great interest to undertake cooperation between both schools to promote academic discipline and current certification as may be compatible between Perù and France. In the next few months we will continue contacts with the directors of this French school.

**MEETING IN URUGUAY**

Aldo Palomino, FIP’s delegate for South America, met in Montevideo (Uruguay) with representatives of the Uruguayan Association of Podiatrists University (AUPU) and its new board, chaired by the newly elected Pdga. Liliana Bello. They discussed projects and activities that the AUPU are considering next year in Uruguay.

The AUPU has been a member of the FIP since 2011. Congratulations to the new board and we wish you success in your work. We will be doing various coordinations from Montevideo and Lima to publicize that good podiatry exists in that country.

**WORLD DIABETES DAY**

On November 14, WORLD DIABETES DAY was celebrated at the School of Podiatry JEVIAL with various activities organized in hospitals and associations linked to the disease. We thank the medical community for the trust placed in us and thus promote the work of the multi-disciplinary team between physician and podiatrist.

**THANKS FOR THE FIP**

Finally I must thank the board of FIP and its president Joseph Caporusso for allowing me to be present as a guest of the council and from there to coordinate the various actions that took place before, during and after the World Congress of Podiatry. It was a great experience to work with amazing people and good professionals. To all members of the FIP board, thank you for sharing your experience and your friendship with me.

**FROM PERU WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR**

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**Swiss Society of Podiatry**

**New Presidency of the SSP**

At our last annual general meeting last May, the members of the SSP have elected Ms. Martine Blaser-Mason, podiatrist in Saint-Sulpice to the position of President of the SSP. You might have already met Martine in Rome.

**Creation of Switzerland Podiatry Organization (OPS)**

Following the meeting of November 27, 2013 between the SPV and the SSP, we are pleased to inform you of the creation of the Swiss Podiatry Organization (OPS). It is a single company combining the SPV and the SSP. This committee is composed as follows:

- 1 Director, Isabelle Kütтел
- 2 Presidents, Martine Blaser-Mason and Edith Dürrenberger
- 2 Vice-president, Myriam Rossat and Mario Malgaroli

However, the SPV and the SSP still are two independent companies, and will continue to work as they have done so far.

The Swiss Podiatry Organization (OPS) is designed to unite our forces, to ensure a good cohesion at the federal level to work on the Frídez motion. It will enable the sharing of
Swiss Society of Podiatry continued

ideas and common goals of the three linguistic regions in the context of a refund by the LAMal.

It remains for me to say that the OPS is in discussion with our colleagues from the Swiss-Italian. They may join this organization under the same conditions as the SPV and the SSP if they wish.

Lifelong learning
The new lifelong learning program of 2014 offers a wide range of various and varied courses. You can sign up on our website: www.podologues.ch

Save the date
The 23rd Congress of the SSP will be held May 2, 2014, theme: the Dermatology foot.

On behalf of the Committee of the SSP, I wish you a great winter and all our best wishes of health, success and prosperity for the new year.

Jennifer Wanner - Mare delegate
SSP for the FIP – IFP

United States

APMA Executive Director and CEO Announces Retirement Plans
Glenn B. Gastwirth, DPM, a fixture of the APMA staff since 1986 and executive director for 16 years, has announced his plans to retire in May 2015. Dr. Gastwirth’s long service to the profession and its association have made him, for many podiatrists, legislators and other health-care professionals, the face of podiatric medicine. Dr. Gastwirth plans to enjoy an active retirement, taking time to read, write, volunteer, spend time with family, and possibly even return to school.

APMA now begins the search for a successor to Dr. Gastwirth. A search committee comprised of APMA trustees; past presidents; delegates; and staff leaders, including Dr. Gastwirth, will begin seeking applicants in January (read the January issue of APMA News for more information about desired qualifications and how to apply). The search committee is slated to identify finalists by late summer 2014 and select a candidate for the position by late fall 2014. That candidate will be confirmed by spring 2015. Dr. Gastwirth will stay on for a short period to assist in the transition.

Find Aloha at the 2014 APMA Annual Scientific Meeting
Join APMA July 24–27 in beautiful Honolulu, Hawaii, for the 2014 Annual Scientific Meeting (The National). In 2014, The National will bring its world-renowned speakers, cutting-edge education, and unparalleled networking opportunities to one of the world’s most beautiful destinations. Advance your podiatric education during the day, and enjoy beautiful beaches, exotic luaus, and the legendary aloha spirit during the afternoons and evenings. This is a perfect opportunity to combine business and pleasure—bring your family along for the vacation of a lifetime. Visit www.apma.org/thenational for more information and to register today.

JAPMA Publishes Special Falls Prevention Issue
The November/December issue of the Journal of the American Podiatric Medical Association (JAPMA) on preventing falls in older people is now available. This special issue on the role of footwear and lower-extremity interventions discusses the association of foot and footwear problems with falls in older adults, the benefit of surgical and nonsurgical interventions targeting foot problems in improving fall-related parameters, and ultimately, risk of falling in older adults. Visit www.japmaonline.org.
Foot health of older people in Finland needs attention

Older people in Finland have multiple foot problems. This was revealed in a PhD study by Minna Stolt of the University of Turku. The study investigated the foot health in older people receiving public home care services in Finland. Altogether 309 older people’s foot health was assessed. Older people have multiple different foot problems of which dry skin, oedema, thickened toe nails and foot pain were the most prevalent. In addition, older people reported that they were unable to self-care their feet. The results confirm the previous studies in the field, but also highlighted the need for foot care and podiatry practices in Finland.

The main purpose of the study was to develop and test a foot health assessment instrument for home care nurses. The instrument revealed to be potential of its psychometrics and usable in clinical nursing practice to identify changes in foot health of older person.

The whole PhD thesis can be downloaded from [http://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/89994](http://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/89994) and the articles mentioned here can be found from Journal of Clinical Nursing:


Captured moments from the 2013 World Congress of Podiatry, held in Rome, Italy on October 17-19, 2013.
Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the online questionnaire after the world congress ended. The numbers are in and overall you’ve told us we’re doing a great job.

Provided below is a quick snapshot of responses related to the 2013 World Congress of Podiatry:

- 61.9% of attendees were female
- 65.9% of delegates work in private practice
- 67.6% said the educational was good to excellent
- 55% of delegates attended workshops
- 75.9 delegates rated the exhibition hall good to excellent
- 38.7% of delegates learned about the 2013 World Congress from friends or colleagues and 20% learned through the FIP website

All feedback is extremely helpful, and we appreciate the honest comments. Most importantly, the responses will be used to make the 2016 World Congress of Podiatry in Montreal, Quebec Canada even better!
Thank you to all the exhibitors and sponsors...

who participated in the FIP World Congress of Podiatry that took place in Rome, Italy on October 17-19, 2013.

You helped to make the 2013 World Congress a spectacular event!
Introducing FIP’s newest board member

As of October 16, 2013, Carine Haemels from Belgium became the FIP’s new Secretary General.

Carine is a practicing podiatrist in Belgium and is also the Clinical Manager for the Special Olympics Fit Feet Europe/Eurasia as well as Scientific Research Manager for Fit Feet Europe/Eurasia. Carine also holds a Masters degree in Podiatry and Education. The work that earned Carine her Master in Podiatry and Education revolved around the relationship between podiatry and intellectual disability, a subject that was not covered during Belgium podiatry education until now. To explore this relationship Carine developed the module “Podiatry and Intellectual Disability.” In the end the module succeeded in enhancing the attitudes of Belgian podiatry students towards people with intellectual disabilities and contributed to bridging the gap that exists between Belgium podiatry education and the intellectually disabled.

AGM update – The 2013 FIP Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday October 16, 2013 at the Sheraton Roma Hotel and Conference Centre in Rome, Italy. In addition to the full agenda meeting, elections were held for three positions:

**Secretary General** – as indicated above, Carine Haemels was elected for a two-year term.

**Treasurer** – Brad Sonnema was re-elected, also for a two-year term.

**Vice President** – with Fernando Penalva’s acceptance at medical school, this position became open as an interim posting. Heidi Corcoran is now the new Vice President.

Next year’s election takes place at the 2014 AGM, which will held on May 10 in Reykjavik, Iceland.
Each year, the FIP acknowledges exemplary individuals across the world for their efforts related to the podiatric profession. This year, the FIP awarded three individuals for the extraordinary work that they have done.

**FIP Lifetime Achievement Award**

– Bob Hardy, Clarks Shoes

Bob Hardy is the Foot Fitting Manager for Clarks International, one of the world’s largest footwear brands. He has worked for Clarks Shoes for 40 years and is a leading expert on feet and foot fitting. He is a Fellow of the Society of Shoe Fitters, the premier independent UK fitting organisation, and is the first member to ever to have achieved membership at the Honours level.

**FIP Distinguished Service Award**

– Dr. Robert Chelin

Dr. Chelin, who has been practicing podiatric medicine in Toronto, Ontario, Canada for 31 years, was chosen by the FIP as the 2013 recipient for his selfless dedication and generosity within the field of podiatry.

It is no secret that Dr. Robert Chelin is passionate about podiatry. In addition to his full-time practice, Dr. Chelin continues to be involved in many different endeavours, all related to podiatric medicine.

Currently, he is Chief Executive Officer of the FIP, a position that he stepped into immediately after his term as past president of the FIP. He was also a past president of the Canadian and Ontario Podiatric Medical Associations.

**FIP Humanitarian Award – Dr. Patricia Nicholas**

After the 2010 earthquake devastated Haiti, Dr. Nicholas immediately flew down, offering whatever assistance she could. Eventually she founded the Kindest Hearts Foundation to better help the people of Haiti. Dr. Nicholas selflessly donated her time and resources to render treatment to injured victims. She continues to operate the podiatry clinic she established by frequently traveling to Haiti and giving back to her community and serving the patients of her private practice here in the United States.

The Foundation has adopted the village of O’Rouck (Anse-a-Veau). Dr. Nicholas manages the clinic in that town but Kindest Hearts also helps with education, rebuilding infrastructure, and job creation. The Foundation’s vision is to adopt one Haitian town at a time, helping its resident become self-sufficient again. Dr. Nicholas continues to visit Haiti regularly to oversee the progress. Dr. Nicholas is also involved in several other humanitarian endeavours.
Leg mechanics, training conditions may predict Achilles pain in runners

In the moment: Sports medicine

Investigators at the University of Tuebingen in Germany have identified alterations in lower leg mechanics and higher impacts caused by “fast” training conditions (e.g., interval training sessions, competitions) as potential risk factors for Achilles tendon pain in runners.

The German researchers recruited runners aged 18 to 55 years with no running injuries in the last six months and performed clinical exams, isometric strength measurements, and 3D kinematic analysis. Participants were asked to keep a training diary weekly for one year and investigators repeated testing if a runner sustained a running-related overuse injury.

One hundred forty-two runners kept training information as instructed; of these, 10 developed Achilles tendon pain. These runners had decreased knee flexor strength and altered sagittal plane knee and ankle kinematics at baseline compared to matched controls, and reported a slight shift from slow to fast training sessions and an increase in exercise in the month prior to injury.

The results were e-published by the Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports on October 31.


European Council of Podiatrists – emphasize powerful collaboration

The European Council of Podiatrists (ECP) is part of the International Federation of Podiatrists (FIP-IFP) and works as a link between the European Union and the FIP-IFP’s European member organisations.

This year has been full of work and the report of ECP was inspected and accepted at the Annual General Meeting in Rome, before the World Congress. This article describes briefly the tasks that ECP fulfilled in the ending year and also highlights the future challenges of the ECP.

ECP has been represented in several meetings in Brussels at the European Parliament and in the CEPLIS General Assembly. CEPLIS publishes regular telegrams, which briefly but informatively tie up the latest decisions and events at the European level. CEPLIS telegrams/e-blasts can be downloaded from the website of CEPLIS http://www.ceplis.org/en/news_list.php. These telegrams are important as they update all European Parliament issues and decisions which we all should be aware.

The ending year has been a great learning occasion for all of the board members. The ECP has achieved many things, but a lot needs to be done already in the near future. During the ECP annual general meeting and board meeting afterwards, several ideas to improve the work of ECP were generated. First, ECP needs feedback from our member organisations and responses to the question of “how to work better for members” are needed. Without open communication between ECP and member organizations, no successful decision can be done. To improve communication, the ECP is structuring an ECP website to archive, deliver and share information to all of our member organisations.

The ECP is looking forward to collaboration with our member organisations.
Practice Management Tips

Secrets of Success: “Pearl”– Jamm

Years ago, SOS created a lightening-round concept of presenting quick, one minute practice “pearls,” jammed into a short period of time. We still utilize this successful presentation vehicle to share some informative and practical tips. Here are some of our most recent ones. We encourage you to share them with your staff.

Patient testimonials are only a request away. If you know your patient has had a satisfying experience, why not ask for their online recommendation? You’re much more likely to get one... if you ask for it.

Take control of your schedule. Instead of telling patients “You can just call us to reschedule,” get them IN the schedule and have them call only if they need to cancel or change. This reduces the number of patient calls to the office and provides a better method of tracking and documenting no-shows.

An inexpensive but memorable “Gift–to–Go” goes a long way. Make your own personal unique surgery gift bag that includes post-op instructions, next appointment, popcorn, free movie rental card, (sugar free) candy, etc.

Have a Cup–o–Joe on us! Keep $10 coffee gift cards on hand to give to patients to brighten their day, honor their birthday, say “thank you for waiting” or if you are forced to reschedule their appointment last minute.

Perception is reality. Refrain from calling your router slip/fee sheet a “superbill!” and your reception area, your “waiting” room. If you say it, patients will believe it.

Housekeeping is EVERYONE’s responsibility. Set an example by cleaning something yourself.

Try it; you’ll like it! There are benefits to having staff give patients a 30 second foot massage after their treatment. Not only will patients love the attention; but using the lotion you dispense in your office turns this patient pleaser into a subtle (but effective) way to introduce your product.

Don’t think it can’t (or won’t) happen to you! Be prepared. Set up and review with staff written emergency plans for your office. Outline everyone’s role in the event of a medical emergency, weather disaster, accident, computer crash or when faced with a belligerent/abusive patient?

The number one reason for claim denials is incorrect data entry. Require that staff double-check their own work in an effort to be more attentive to detail for cleaner claim submission and on-time claim payment.

ALL members of the team need to do their fair share around the office. When one person slacks on the job, it only makes it hard on everyone else!
Remember privacy rules when updating patient information. Don’t ask patients to verbalize personal information at the front desk by asking, “Has anything changed?” Instead, have them re-affirm their contact info, address, insurance, etc. at each visit by asking, “Do you still live at…?” (Only reveal street #) and “Does your phone number still end in ----?” (State last 4 numbers.)

Before hiring new staff, invite them to lunch and observe their interaction with service people. Likely, they will treat your patients similarly. Also, make sure staff interacts with them to avoid unwanted personality clashes.

Make phone calls (within the first two months) to patients owing money a necessary part of your collection policy. Personal calls get far better results than do ongoing static monthly statements.

Don’t de-value your time. If you have difficulty trying to get a “talkative” patient off the phone, try speaking in the past tense. It sends a message to your listener that the call is coming to a close.

Doctor held captive? In place of the common “Doctor, there is phone call for you” excuse to pull them away from a “needy” patient, protocol should dictate that staff enter the treatment room after a certain time and ask, “Doctor, how can I help you?” giving him/her a subtle way out without making the patient feel their visit is cut short by an interruptive phone call. After a while, they catch on to the overused “phone call” routine.

Staff should make sure patients (particularly NEW patients) are set up in the treatment chair with BOTH shoes/socks removed before the doctor enters.

Trade in those sticky notes (that wind up in places unknown) with a spiral notebook. This becomes a reliable reminder tool, used to follow up with all phone messages, promises and necessary tasks.

Have a little cheese with your whine? Adopt a new policy: No complaints will be heard unless they are also accompanied by three solutions. After a while, your complainer will find the “work” too hard & give up.

Ask patients how they would like to be addressed and make a note of it in their chart. This prevents unacceptable first names, inappropriate nicknames, or uncomfortable terms of endearment.

Patient satisfaction drops significantly with every 5 minutes of wait time. If you expect your patients to respect your time, make every effort to respect theirs and make necessary adjustments that result in an “on-time” schedule.

Instead of informing patients that the office is closed due to a “Staff Meeting” – post a sign on your door (or leave a message on your answering machine) that says... “Staff Training in Session.” Patients appreciate time spent training staff.

Acknowledge three things that you learned from your co-workers, employer or employee at the end of each week.

Ms. Homisak, President of SOS Healthcare Management Solutions, has a Certificate in Human Resource Studies from Cornell University School of Industry and Labor Relations. She is the 2010 recipient of Podiatry Management’s Lifetime Achievement Award and recently inducted into the PM Hall of Fame. Lynn is also an Editorial Advisor for Podiatry Management Magazine and recognized nationwide as a speaker, writer and expert in staff and human resource management.
While May 2014 is a few months away, you might want to start making plans now for celebrating World Foot Health Awareness Month, which takes place in May. To help FIP member associations to take part in this important event, over the years the FIP has developed public awareness campaigns, based on a specific theme each year.

For 2014, the theme is “Focus on your nail and skin health.” This is a topic that podiatrists around the world can relate to. In addition to a poster customized for each member country, this year’s campaign also includes a Special Focus section, a resource guide, a True/False quiz, a list of Do’s and Don’ts and Frequently Asked Questions. These documents are posted on the FIP website at www.fip-ifp.org Click on the WFHAM globe.
Mark Your Calendar

2014 continued

September
Ontario Podiatric Medical Association Annual Conference
Toronto, Ontario
www.opma.ca

October 18
Orthotic Technology Forum
Eindhoven, The Netherlands
www.orthotic-technology-forum.com

October 17–18
National Congress of Podiatry
Paris, France
fed.nationale.podologues@wanadoo.fr

November 13–15
SCP Annual Conference
Bournemouth, U.K.
www.feetforlife.org

November TBD
Live Well With Diabetes
Vancouver, British Columbia
www.foothealth.ca

2015

July 23–26
APMA Annual Scientific Conference
Orlando, Florida
www.apma.org

August 2–8
International Association for Identification
Sacramento, California
www.theiai.org

2016

May 26–28
FIP World Congress of Podiatry
Montreal, Quebec
www.fipworldcongress.org

July 14–17
APMA Annual Scientific Conference
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
www.apma.org

August 7–13
International Association for Identification
Cincinnati, Ohio
www.theiai.org

2017

August 13–12
International Association for Identification
Atlanta, Georgia
www.theiai.org

2014

May 2–4
International Region 7/APMA Podiatry Conference
Banff, Alberta
http://www.region7apma.org/annualmeeting.html

July 10–14
AOSSM Annual Meeting
Seattle, Washington
www.sportsmed.org

July 24–27
APMA Annual Scientific Conference
Honolulu, Hawaii
www.apma.org

August 10–16
International Association for Identification
Minneapolis, Minnesota
www.theiai.org
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